

REMARKS

The present response is intended to be a full and complete response to the Advisory Action mailed April 7, 2010. Claims 11 – 15, and 18 - 20 are pending in the present application. .

In this amendment, limitations previously found in claims 16 and 17 have been added to claim 11. Claims 16 and 17 have been cancelled without prejudice. Support for these amendments may be found in the specification. No new matter has been introduced.

Applicants respectfully request continued examination of Claims 11 – 15, and 18 – 20 and allowance of all pending claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103:

In the Office Action dated January 21, 2010, the Examiner rejects Claims 11 to 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hogg et al '391 in view of Corduan et al' 504. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 16 and 17 have been cancelled, thereby rendering these rejections moot as pertaining to them.

Hogg et al. '391 requires approximately 75% of the air to go to the Claude Expander 24. This leaves well under 25% of the air to go to the booster 60, since there must be a flow through conduit 32. In contrast, claim 11 of the instant application, as currently amended, requires 40% to 90% of the air to go to the booster and the expander.

Corduan et al '504 compresses all the air to 5.4 bar, well below that which is required in claim 11 of the instant application, as currently amended. Corduan et al. '504 also requires that all of the boosted air be expanded in the turbine, hence there is no 'first fraction', as required by the instant invention.

Thus the present invention is not rendered obvious by this combination. Hence the rejection is improper and should be vacated.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants maintain that Claims 11 - 15, and 18 - 20 are now in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner believe a telephone call would expedite the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Applicants do not believe that any fee is due at this time. However, in the event that any additional fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to debit deposit account number 01-1375 for the amount due. Also, the Commissioner is authorized to credit any overpayment with regard to the present response to deposit account number 01-1375.

Respectfully submitted,

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